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15 YEAR SUMMARY

Ulbricht Surveys German Scene

The fifteenth anniversary of the foundation of the German Democratic Republic was marked throughout the Republic by big celebrations, attended by foreign delegations from nearly 50 countries. High point of the celebrations in Berlin was a speech by Walter Ulbricht, Chairman of the State Council, who surveyed the progress made and the prospects ahead. He dealt at length with the problem of German reunification, announced an amnesty for 10,000 prisoners, suggested that it might be possible for socialism to be introduced in West Germany by the "buying-out" of the monopolists, and forecast further big improvements in the standard of living in the GDR.

Here are some of the main points made by Walter Ulbricht in his wide-ranging speech:

"The positive side of developments in Germany in the past fifteen years is that we have been able, in the eastern part of Germany, to establish the socialist system. The remnants of nazism have been swept away, the monopolists and militarists have been deprived of power. We have created a powerful nationalised industry, our peasants have joined together in agricultural cooperatives.

"The negative side of developments has been that in West Germany finance capital and the western occupation authorities prevented the unity of the working class; this, together with illusions about an 'easier path' provided by the Marshall Plan, made it possible for the power of the great monopolies and of German militarism to be restored there. The ruling forces of the imperialist west created the West German separatist state as part of their NATO alliance, and prevented the development of normal relations between the two German states.

"The ruling circles in West Germany claim that they are in favour of German unity, but we must ask them: 'What sort of unity do you want? What do you want unity for?' We must always remember that Germany was a united country when it launched two world wars. The West German monopolies want to continue this course. We want a peaceable, democratic and progressive Germany, and this is the only conceivable unity.

"It is impossible to predict today when and under what circumstances the German states will reunite, but it is clear that the process must begin with mutual recognition and with negotiations between the two German governments. Germany can only be reunited by peaceful and democratic methods, or not at all, since the only alternative would be a frightful civil war, probably as part of a world war, and such a war would not be reunification but the biological elimination of Germany.

"When we talk about reunification, one thing should be made clear: reunification is not necessary in order to ensure further economic and social progress in the German Democratic Republic, and a good life for its citizens. Even without reunification we can complete the construction of socialism and stride forward to the construction of communism.

"What are we waiting for in the reunification question? Should we wait another five years, and then a further five years, without any serious attempts being made? If we do this, then the time will come when the majority of Germans will know no other state of affairs than a split Germany, and will perhaps not be able to imagine any other state of affairs. This means that we are approaching the critical point; if we pass this point Germany will probably remain split for an indefinite period. The two German states are developing in opposite directions, and as the years pass their reunification obviously becomes ever more difficult."

Walter Ulbricht then suggested that the key to a solution of the German problem lay in the hands of the German working class in east and west. An agreement between the So-

Rusk's Useful Recipe

"I think that although there are grave differences between the Communist world and the free world, between the Soviet and other major powers, that even from their point of view there needs to be some shape and form to international relations, that it is not in their interest to have this world structure dissolve into complete anarchy, that **great states and particularly nuclear powers have to be in a position to deal with each other, to transact business with each other, to try to meet problems with each other, and that requires the maintenance of correct relations and access to the leadership on all sides."**

US Secretary of State Dean Rusk in testimony to the Warren Commission, June 10th 1964

GERMAN REPORT comments: We are glad to note that Dean Rusk agrees with the Government of the German Democratic Republic, which constantly urges that the governments of the two German states should "deal with each other, transact business with each other, maintain correct relations." He would be doing a useful job for world peace if he urged his views on the West German Government, which stubbornly refuses to deal with the Government of the GDR.

(cont. from front page)

15 YEAR SUMMARY

cialist Unity Party in the GDR and the Social Democrats in West Germany would provide the way out.

"Today, thanks to the existence of the Soviet Union and the socialist world system, the question can be examined as to whether the workers in some countries may not be able, under capitalist conditions, to use their political and economic struggle in order to reduce the power of the great monopolies, and later to 'buy them out'."

Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx had considered this not only possible, but under certain conditions possibly the "cheapest way" of establishing socialism, Walter Ulbricht recalled.

"Since socialist modes of production have already conquered in one part of Germany, the GDR, we must consider this possibility very seriously".

He suggested that the German working class parties and trade unions should consider publishing a joint magazine which would discuss the ways and means of bringing the two German states together.

"Reparations"

"When the GDR was established in 1949, there was still plenty of rubble to be cleared away. We had a scarcity economy, and at the same time we had to do all that we could to make reparation for the enormous damage done in the Second World War to the Soviet Union and other nations. The citizens of the small German Democratic Republic paid in those years the reparations for the whole of Germany. A West German Social Democratic scientist recently calculated that as a result of this, West Germany really owes the GDR several tens of thousands of millions of marks. The Bonn state, he suggested, should begin to pay off this debt to the GDR and its citizens. And he did not include in his calculations the fact that under the conditions of the open frontier up to 1961 the ruling forces in West Germany robbed us of at least 30 thousand million marks. I do not wish to dwell on this subject today, but I would consider it only right and proper if West Germany were to be presented quite officially with this bill.

Amnesty

"To mark the 15th anniversary of the foundation of the GDR, the State Council has found it possible to announce a far-reaching amnesty. The GDR is so strong, and the educational force of the whole community is so powerful, that the release of about 10,000 prisoners will scarcely present a serious danger to security and peaceful life.

"The State Council has therefore decided to pardon persons sentenced to imprisonment if they have shown during the period of their detention that they have learned their lesson. Sentences will be reduced for persons who committed serious crimes against the GDR as the result of the subversive methods used by western espionage organisations, and other persons imprisoned for serious crimes. Pardoned prisoners will be released by December 20th 1964. Measures will naturally be taken to ensure that these released persons are reintegrated speedily in normal life.

"We must make it quite plain to the released agents, however, that any attempt to resume their criminal activities will be crushed in the bud. We would at the same time urge the Bonn Government to help to dismantle the cold war. We shall continue our policy of establishing normal relations between the two German states, while at the same time we deal, according to the laws of the GDR, with all hostile activity."

Future Prospects

Surveying future prospects in the GDR, Walter Ulbricht forecast that if present plans were fulfilled, real income would increase by between 20 per cent and 25 per cent by 1970. In the next few years, the five-day week would be gradually introduced, working hours would be reduced, and minimum annual holidays increased from 12 working days to 15 working days. These improvements were extremely difficult for the GDR, because the losses of two world wars had meant that only 59 per hundred of the population were today of working age.

Elections

Turning to the question of the electoral system in the GDR, Walter Ulbricht suggested that the present electoral practice, under which citizens help at all stages in drawing up a consolidated list of candidates of all the coalition parties, but on election day itself can only approve or disapprove the list in toto, should be modified.

"The present stage in the development of the German Democratic Republic to a people's state (Volksstaat), and experiences gained in the 1963 elections, strengthen our view that we should continue our course of expanding our socialist electoral system. It is proposed that beginning with the next elections to local councils the following steps should be taken:

(1) The electoral districts will be further reduced in size, so that there will be an even closer contact between voters and elected representatives.

(2) The lists of candidates should contain up to double as many candidates as there are seats to be filled. The voters will then select their delegates in direct and secret elections by a simple majority."

GDR Frontier Guard Killed

Armed West Berlin civilians shot and killed a GDR frontier guard well inside the territory of the German Democratic Republic in the early hours of October 5th. The shooting took place at the East Berlin end of an underground tunnel excavated from West Berlin under the frontier. When GDR officials discovered the tunnel a group of three or four West Berliners, who had entered East Berlin illegally through the tunnel, opened fire and killed the GDR guard, Corporal Egon Schultz.

According to West Berlin press reports the tunnel had been financed partly by a West German illustrated weekly, in return for exclusive rights to the story, and partly by the West Berlin Christian Democratic Union, which hoped to use the tunnel for the passage of its agents. West Berlin newspapers also stated that the armed West Berlin civilians had been equipped with pistols and other military equipment from West Berlin police stores.

Although the West Berlin authorities were in possession of full details of the persons responsible for the shooting, the illegal possession of arms, and illicit passage across the frontier of the GDR, no action was taken.

The GDR Government protested to the West Berlin authorities on October 6th, pointing out that such frontier provocations and murders seriously endangered the recent agreement on the issue of passes to West Berliners to visit relatives in East Berlin.

British Greetings for GDR Birthday

A message of greetings to the GDR on its 15th birthday, signed by leading trade union officials, representatives of the cooperative movement, the Labour and Communist Parties and peace organisations, was presented in East Berlin on October 5th. The message, which was presented to GDR Prime Minister Willi Stoph by Fred Tonge, Labour member of the London County Council, stated:

"On the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the foundation of the German Democratic Republic we send you, and through you to your fellow citizens, our warm greetings and heartfelt good wishes for the continued progress of your country.

"We are convinced that friendly relations between our peoples, the forging of links between us in culture, science, art, sport and many other fields, will be in both our interests.

"We are eager to see an extension of trade between our countries. Above all, we want our friendship to grow as a contribution to the cause which is nearest to all our hearts – the cause of peace.

"We remember that this year, 1964, is also the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War and the 25th anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War. We cannot ignore the dangers of a third and infinitely more devastating war and we are thankful that the German Democratic Republic is exerting its influence in favour of the elimination of nuclear weapons from both German republics, has declared in favour of other measures of disarmament with adequate controls, and has accepted as frontiers of peace and friendship the borders with her neighbours.

"We look in the near future to a strengthening of our friendship and to the elimination of the barriers still standing in the way of full participation by the German Democratic Republic in international affairs. We believe that this must be the first step to the goal we all seek, the ending of the division of Berlin and of Germany and the building in Europe and the world of a peace based on disarmament and acceptance of the right of all peoples to live in their lands under the social system and government of their choice."

In a short speech of thanks, and a subsequent 30 minute talk with the British delegation which presented the message of greetings, Prime Minister Stoph expressed his confidence that the inevitable future normalisation of relations between the GDR and Britain would be a step forward for peace, and would be in the interests of both states.

NAZIS IN THE NEWS

1. "Hitler No Murderer"

Hitler was not a murderer, and the nazi crimes were not crimes, claimed a West German defence lawyer at a war crimes trial in Hanover on October 7th.

The lawyer, Gerd Heinecke, was speaking in defence of a group of SS men charged with the murder of 7000 Jews in the Ukrainian town of Vlodava. He claimed that there was no case to answer, since a murder charge was only valid if the killing was carried out for "base motives". Hitler had no base motives, but was convinced that he had a historic mission, the lawyer claimed.

The defence attorney stated: "A statesman who kills people because he believes they are an evil influence on his people can never act from base motives. Hitler was acting on the basis of the finest motives. Since these killings were not murder, my clients cannot be found guilty of complicity in murder."

In an involved legal argument the lawyer claimed that the mass killing of the Jews could not be described as particularly cruel. "Hitler had no interest in frightening the Jews before they were gassed, or that they should suffer during the procedure" he stated. Any such sufferings were "undesirable side effects" he said.

He concluded his plea with an appeal to the West German judicial authorities to stop all trials of persons involved in nazi crimes, since these persons were simply "doing their duty".

2. SS General Sentenced

SS General Karl Wolff was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment by a Munich court on September 30th. He had been found guilty of complicity in the killing of at least 300,000 Polish Jews.

Karl Wolff, who was chief adjutant to Heinrich Himmler, was the man mainly responsible for rounding up hundreds of thousands of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto in summer 1942, and dispatching them to the liquidation camp at Treblinka.

Wolff was only arrested by the West German authorities in 1961, although he was living openly under his own name in Bavaria, and full details of his war-time crimes were public property. He was listed as a major criminal still at large in "The Final Solution", the definitive book on the nazi liquidation of the Jews written by Gerald Reitlinger and published in London in 1953. In 1959 a GDR documentary film was produced showing war-time pictures of Karl Wolff, and showing him after the war sunning himself on the pier of his lake-side mansion in Bavaria. The British Board of Film Censors refused to issue a certificate for the showing of the film in Britain unless shots of Wolff's house and himself on the pier were deleted, stating: "The Board decided to maintain its policy of being unwilling to pass for exhibition sequences which appear to be in any way defamatory to living persons. . . The Board has no objection to the film showing the war-time activities of the persons concerned, and by removing information about their present employment and whereabouts no indication is given that they are in fact living persons."

3. Swiss Ban Globke

The Swiss Government will ban Dr Hans Globke, formerly ex-Chancellor Adenauer's chief assistant, from taking up residence there, Swiss President Ludwig von Moos announced on October 8th. Globke, who drafted the anti-Semitic Nuremberg Laws of Hitler, was sentenced to life imprisonment in absentia by a GDR court for his nazi crimes; he had built himself a villa near Lausanne, and intended to spend his retirement there. "We are determined to avoid situations which would have a harmful effect on our good relations with other countries" President von Moos stated.

It Started With Little Gustav

by Rudolf Hirsch

"The accused should not prevaricate: he should admit that he threw little Gustav out of the window". These were the first words which I heard when I entered a court-room in the German Democratic Republic in 1949.

That's fine, I thought. My first job as a crime reporter, and I get a murder case. But when I heard further evidence my mistake was soon cleared up. The case had nothing to do with murder; it was simply one of the cases, so frequent in those days, against somebody who had stolen electric current.

Electricity was rationed in those days, and quite a lot of people attempted to avoid the restrictions by installing a useful but illegal invention known as a "little Gustav" which reversed the wheels of the electric meter.

The "little Gustav" had one fault; if you did not watch out it turned the dials back too far, showing that you had consumed a negative amount of current. An inspector from the electricity company had discovered such a curious meter reading, but could not find the little culprit, which led the prosecutor to assume that Gustav had been thrown from the window.

Today, fifteen years later, scarcely anyone thinks of defrauding the electricity company. People who recognise the words "little Gustav" have mostly grey hairs now.

The flood of electricity thieves was followed by the epoch which we crime reporters call "the scrap-metal era". Brass, copper and lead were stolen in large quantities. Our courts had to resurrect and dust off an antique law so that scrap thefts could be properly dealt with. The war in Korea had driven up the prices for scrap, and water-pipes, taps and door-handles were being sawn off and taken across the open frontier to West Berlin, where there were plenty of scrap merchants who asked no questions. I remember one case where a fine bronze statue in a public square was sawn up and sold to a West Berlin firm situated by a fitting coincidence on Vandal Street, just round the corner from Army Road.

The judicial authorities requested the crime reporters to give plenty of publicity to the scrap-metal thefts. We did what we could, but this branch of crime only subsided when scrap prices went down again, making the game no longer worth the candle.

This was also the period of the bigamy trials. Very many people thought that their war-time marriages had been dissolved by themselves, or that the records of the registry offices had been destroyed in the bombing. There was a wave of bigamy, sometimes even trigamy. Today the registry offices work properly again, and bigamy has become a rare crime.

The waves of scrap and bigamy were followed by a wave of camera smuggling. The open frontier to West Berlin, and the black-market exchange rate in West Berlin made it very profitable to export illegally the products of the optical industry of the German Democratic Republic. The crime reporters were asked to write as often as they could about camera smuggling. We did not always do so, for if we always wrote about the same subject our reports might have been printed, but not so frequently read. In addition, it is a great mistake to think that a camera smuggler will inevitably realise his mistake and develop into a Hero of Socialist Labour if he constantly reads what a serious crime this is, and how heavily he can be punished for it.

The change in our lives in the past fifteen years has removed many causes of conflict, but we should never forget that it has also produced new conflicts too. The problems of little Gustav, of scrap-metal, of bigamy and camera smuggling have almost entirely disappeared; the closing of the state frontier in Berlin has solved many problems, but not abolished all conflicts. As long as the frontier was open, a lot of rootless young people, particularly liable to come in conflict with the law, wandered off to West Berlin and West Germany; now they cannot, and as a result, although the crime figures have continued to fall, there has been a rise in the percentage of crimes committed by young people.

For the past fifteen years I have been writing about the courts, and the changes in the courts and those who appear before them. Sometimes prosecutors and judges have urged me not to write about certain types of cases. "Why report on murders and robberies? They are no longer typical of our times" they say. Yes, they are right. Crimes and their punishment are no longer "typical", but my acquaintances are at a loss for an answer when I ask them to tell me what the "typical" crimes are under socialism.

The "typical" factor is the way in which everybody concerned — the courts, the police, the public prosecutors, the factories, the factory "conflict commissions" and so on, react to the offence and the offender.

Today we abandon nobody to his fate, unless he is knowingly attempting to destroy human life, or to use murder and terror to reintroduce the inhuman system of capitalism. That is why our Government always urges that the collective group, the team, should use its educative influence to see that the offender remains a one-time offender. And that is why there is today real hope for all those who stand accused before the court, or before their colleagues in a "conflict commission" or "arbitration commission", our new forms of justice which are taking over more and more of the cases formerly dealt with by the courts.

Two Men in Algiers

The German Democratic Republic is represented in Algiers by Karl Loesch, 49, head of the GDR Commercial Delegation, who fought against Franco in Spain in the ranks of the International Brigade. Caught by the Gestapo in 1940, he spent the war in a concentration camp.

West Germany is represented in Algiers by Dr Carl-August Zapp, 60, Ambassador of the German Federal Republic. He held membership card No. 2,717,559 in the Nazi Party. During the war he served on the nazi staff in occupied Holland.

The Bard and Brecht

In 1607 William Shakespeare, one of the greatest dramatists of all time, wrote a tragedy called "Coriolanus"; it is considered one of his lesser works, and rarely played. In 1951 Bertolt Brecht, one of the greatest dramatists of our days, decided to adapt the play, rescuing some of the great poetry from obscurity, and changing the weight given to the different characters and their motivations. Brecht died in 1956 before completing the work of adaptation.

In 1964, the Berliner Ensemble, one of the greatest theatres of today, staged its completed version of Brecht's masterly adaptation, now a great work of art in its own right. The premiere, in East Berlin on September 25th, was the theatre event of the year, attended by theatrical experts and critics from all parts of Europe.

In an early issue of GERMAN REPORT we hope to bring extracts from international reviews of this exciting Anglo-German theatrical collaboration. On this page we present two pictures from "Coriolanus" by William Shakespeare and Bertolt Brecht.

(left) Coriolanus (Ekkehard Schall) and Sicinius Velutus, tribune of the people (Martin Flörchinger)

(below) A battle scene at the gates of Corioli (sets and costumes: Karl von Appen)

Dismantling Democracy in W. Germany

By Professor Ossip Flechtheim (West Berlin)

(Professor Flechtheim teaches political theory at the "Free University" in West Berln. During the nazi period he was forced to emigrate from Germany to the United States, and after the war worked in the Office of the US Prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials of the main war criminals. The article which we reprint is slightly abridged from an article originally published in the liberal West Berlin newspaper "Spandauer Volksblatt" on September 6th.)

Germany has had little success with its democratic constitutions. The 1849 Constitution never came into force at all; the 1919 Weimar Constitution was torn up by Hitler in 1933; the third, — the West German Constitution of 1949 — is not exactly suffering from galloping consumption but does appear to be going into a gradual decline. What remains of its democratic content is hardly likely to survive the various emergency powers laws...

The parliamentary system now mainly assures the preponderance and stability of the executive at the expense of the legislature, which is even in danger of forfeiting its original rights (budget rights, right to initiate legislation, control of the government and administration), partly to the executive, but also to the most powerful pressure groups which infiltrate the parties and fractions, fill the parliamentary committees with their supporters and attempt to exercise direct pressure on government heads, ministers and officials. Electors are thus left only with the right to confirm the head of government and his "team" in a kind of plebiscite every four years. How far this represents a genuine decision depends upon the extent to which the parties and party leaders campaigning for election differ from each other and whether the defeated party takes its opposition role seriously or simply tries to enter an open or concealed coalition.

To strengthen the executive does not always mean to strengthen the Cabinet. Power often shifts farther — to the ministerial bureaucracy and the big power groups working with them. This shifting of emphasis can hardly be completely avoided in view of the steady increase in administrative duties; it is further accentuated by the transfer of important political and economic tasks to the so-called supra-national institutions and their offices, but also by the militarisation connected with the cold war. Co-operation between the managers of the armaments industry and the steadily growing armed forces is also an increasing threat to democracy in the Federal Republic, as in the USA, since it is especially subject to the pressure of East-West contradictions — in the USA as the principle power in the West and in the Federal Republic as the most advanced bridgehead in the European war theatre.

But in contrast to the USA, German bureaucracy — and indeed the nation as a whole — has only very feeble democratic traditions. Reconstruction began in 1945 under an administrative machinery still semi-totalitarian. Since then, restoration and re-nazification have triumphed, especially within the ministerial bureaucracy and in the judiciary. Of the 48 judges in the Federal Administrative Court, for example, 40 were members of the Nazi Party. The personnel departments (including that of the Federal Ministry of Interior) are almost exclusively filled with former Nazis. State Secretaries Globke, Vialon, Hopf etc. were enthusiastic supporters of Hitler. General Foertsch, sentenced to 25 years' prison as a war criminal, was appointed Inspector-General of the Federal Army. The chiefs of the criminal police in Aachen, Bonn, Moenchen-Gladbach, Cologne, Krefeld, Dusseldorf, Essen, Dortmund and Gelsenkirchen are all former SS officers. The head of the criminal police in North Rhine-Westphalia is also a former SS major.

Judges and public prosecutors and senior and subordinate police officers exposed as Nazi mass murderers are either still at their posts or have been pensioned off.

Where court proceedings are actually taken against such persons judges turn a blind eye to their crimes. Two women who organised holidays in the GDR for West German children were sent to prison for a year as communists, but an SS prisoner was sentenced to only 15 months' prison, including 11 months' detention before trial.

Developments in the political parties, as in technology and culture, economy and communications, have been largely under American influence since 1945. The parties are changing mainly in the following three ways:

1. the number of parties is decreasing — a few typical monopoly parties control political life.
2. these big parties are being institutionalised — they are developing more and more into quasi-state parties.
3. the progressive and dynamic elements in the party system are declining and threaten to disappear altogether.

The CDU/CSU (Christian Democratic Union and Bavarian Christian Socialist Union — ed.) continues to be the strongest party, not only on the strength of its election successes, but also because it represents one of the new power constellations in economic, social and cultural affairs. Its Christian basis is so broad that it can include all the elements which are basically in agreement with the existing order. Supported and financed by the biggest pressure groups, from the Federation of German In-

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dustries to the Catholic Church, its position is unlikely to be assailed by any but the most violent disturbances.

In 1945 socialism in a united Germany was a general demand – both in the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and in a considerable section of the CDU. In 1964 the "social market economy" of West Germany has the support not only of the CDU but also of an increasingly large section of the SPD. Both big parties have shifted noticeably to the right, and all political parties in West Germany today identify themselves more or less with the status quo.

The political parties try to exploit the state for themselves – for their own ideals and material interests. Thus without ceasing to be a class state, the Federal Republic is becoming a mass and party state. But as the state becomes the object of the parties so the parties are becoming more and more objects of the state.

Article 21 of the Constitution raised the parties to the status of constitutional institutions – on the one hand ante-state bodies arising out of free associations of persons with similar ideological views, on the other hand "institutions" linked with the state, quasi-legal hierarchies. As in the USA, the parties are being increasingly grafted on to the state apparatus, developing more and more into institutions of power and government. And even where, like other modern state institutions, they function as service organisations, they regard their members and electors as passive consumers who must be persuaded and manipulated, rather than as active citizens to be drawn into their work. Inner-party democracy and forming of opinion from below are becoming mere empty words.

In the meantime, rigid leadership of the SPD from the top has been so perfected that – unlike the situation prevailing in the socialist parties of France and Italy, or even in the SPD itself before 1914, during the Weimar Republic and again during the years immediately after 1945 – there is today no room for various platforms, trends or fractions in it. The party executive's power here resembles absolutism and – when party justice fails, as it often does – not necessarily enlightened absolutism.

Paragraph 29 of the SPD Statute, confirmed at the Hanover Congress in 1960, reminds us painfully of summary court trial procedure. If the party executive decides that membership of some other organisation is incompatible with membership of the SPD, it can at once summarily expel from its ranks a member accused of belonging to such an organisation; there is no right of defence or appeal. Independent political activity of members, for instance in youth or students' organisations, is forbidden and even the expression of political or ideological views not fully in accord with the party line can lead to expulsion. The most glaring case in point is the action taken against an SPD member who attacked Luther and the churches.

On September 21st 1949 Kurt Schumacher (SPD chairman, ed.), as Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Opposition, issued a warning in his speech on Adenauer's first government statement:

"The nature and composition of this government give rise to a serious danger that the new state may become an authoritarian state defending property... We have today a state which we Social Democrats regard mainly as a state of social restoration whose leaders, we fear, may too easily be tempted to treat the masses as objects."

This gloomy forecast is now coming true. Slowly but surely, political reality in the Federal Republic is becoming more authoritarian and more restorationist.

Curiously blind to the probable course of events, the authors of the Constitution wanted to make the Bonn Republic a purely "representative democracy". Opportunities for the people to share or directly control government power were limited to participation in elections and party work. The elections have since become largely acclamations and plebiscites confirming government action already taken, the parties regarding it as their main task to get the people either to vote for the government or to mobilise a pseudo-opposition which cooperates more and more fully with the government.

Constitutional reality has been transformed. Active cooperation of citizens and their organisations in political life for the purpose of deciding upon daily political democracy is now discouraged, and any criticism or opposition in decisive foreign policy, social or economic questions, or even in cultural matters, is in danger of being labelled "unpatriotic", "communist" or "atheist". Open discussions of vital national problems is taboo. Since the disappearance, after 1960, of what was already a very tame official opposition by the SPD – and from time to time by the FDP (Free Democratic Party, ed.) – anybody who dares to make a left-wing criticism is liable to find himself treated as no longer belonging to the body of the community. In our thoroughly organised and institutionalised society heretics are not burnt (for which we must be thankful) but are forced into isolation; only a few do not, sooner or later, become resigned or adjust themselves to the situation.

The Constitution of 1949 was at least an attempt to cement the basic rights of citizens. The first decisive inroads into freedom came with rearmament in 1956. Since then the accent has shifted more and more from the social state to the armament state, and war preparations now threaten the essential basic freedoms; looked at from this angle, the "Spiegel" affair was much more than an incident – it was a symptom of the attempt to set up an authoritarian state defending property which should at the same time be a military state. We have recently seen how Federal Constitutional Court judges who showed courage and independence were not re-elected, so that this organ, which had for some time withstood the authoritarian tendencies of the government and majority party, has been undermined at its core. The impending emergency powers legislation will probably complete the dismantling of democracy.

While in England the monarchical form of state has been given a democratic content, the democratic form of state in West Germany has been given an authoritarian content, since those in power are too deeply enamoured of authority and the masses have not matured to democracy. There thus remains only the hope that a relaxation of international tension and victory of the democratic forces abroad will, in the end, infuse new life into democracy in West Germany. The Federal Republic's present isolated position becomes daily more difficult to maintain.

Democratic
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BERLIN NOTEBOOK

On October 1st 1944, in the closing months of the Second World War, General Friedrich Christiansen, nazi military commander in Holland, ordered the deportation to Germany as hostages of all the 592 male inhabitants of the little Dutch village of Putten; only 40 of them returned from the death camp to which they were sent. Earlier in the nazi occupation of Holland General Friedrich Christiansen had played a central role in the liquidation of the Dutch Jews.

After the war a Dutch court sentenced the general to twelve years imprisonment as a war criminal.

This summer the West German town of Wyk, in which General Christiansen was born, conferred upon this convicted war criminal the freedom of the town, named a street after him, and placed a memorial tablet upon his birthplace.

Commenting on the honours given to a nazu criminal, the Dutch newspaper "Trouw" stated on October 2nd: "This is incredible and shameful".

The Minister of the Interior of Schleswig-Holstein, West German province in which Wyk is situated, is Hartwig Schlegelberger, son of Hitler's Minister of Justice. He declared that nothing could be done about the case.

* * *

In the last issue of GERMAN REPORT we reprinted on the front page part of an interesting graph from "Life" showing that the GDR was right up in the front rank of the nations of the world in terms of relative industrial output, state of development and growth prospects; and we noted at the same time that this graph must have come as a surprise to readers of "Life", since both that magazine and its stablemate "Time" generally describe the GDR as a ramshackle country on the edge of breakdown.

When I planned the front page, I originally intended to give a few examples of the way that "Time" and "Life" generally referred to the German Democratic Republic, but more urgent work interrupted me before I could cull any good examples from the files.

As soon as GERMAN REPORT had gone to press, in came the October 2nd issue of "Time" with this magnificent and highly-loaded description of the GDR: "Long the reddest, deadest corpse in the Soviet satellite closet, East Germany showed faint stirrings of unnatural life last week." I wonder how many readers of these two leading American magazines noticed the odd fact that "East Germany, the deadest corpse" in "Time" on October 2nd, had been listed in "Life" of September 21st as fifth nation in the world in relative industrial output, development and growth prospects.

While we are on the subject of making news without straw, the case of the "Great GDR Blackmail Plot" is not without interest. On September 29th, most West German and West Berlin newspapers printed screaming headlines: "Ulbricht Wants to Blackmail Bonn" (Bild Zeitung), "Pankow Wants to Blackmail Us" (BZ, West Berlin), and so on. The stories described with a wealth of detail how the GDR was allegedly demanding vast credits from West Germany, and was threatening to cut the traffic lines between West Germany and West Berlin if these credits were not granted. It would have been quite a story if it had been true, but next day even the West German Government spokesman had to admit that it was a complete phoney; there had been no ultimatum, no blackmail, no threats. It was just another case of certain circles in Bonn launching a crude forgery in the hope of disturbing the first faint shoots of a more sensible attitude in Bonn towards relations between the two German states.

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On the rare occasions that the West German authorities decide to take legal action against persons implicated in neo-nazi activities, they generally find that they have bitten their own posteriors.

In the first week of October Cologne Provincial Court opened proceedings against Helmut Cramer, a 40-year-old former lieutenant in the SS, who recently published a series of very objectionable books prasing the war-time exploits of the Waffen-SS, the front-line branch of Hitler's black-uniformed murder unit. The charge against Cramer was that he had published "writings dangerous to the state".

Cramer's defence is simple. He has applied that ex-Chancellor Adenauer, ex-Defence Minister Franz-Josef Strauss, and ex-NATO General Hans Speidel shall be heard as witnesses to testify that they have gone publicly on record with very warm words about the Waffen-SS. He cites the following examples:

Chancellor Adenauer stated in 1953: "The men of the Waffen-SS were soldiers like all the rest. Foreign countries must be told that the Waffen-SS had nothing to do with the Sicherheitsdienst and the Gestapo. Make it clear that the Waffen-SS shot no Jews, but that the Soviets feared them as first-class soldiers."

Defence Minister Strauss stated: "You all know what I personally think about the achievements of the Waffen-SS units at the front. I naturally include them in my great respect for the German soldiers in the last world war."

General Hans Spiedel stated: "The 12th SS Panzer Division, under the leadership of Major General Kurt Meyer of the Waffen-SS, did outstanding work in defence against the invasion."

The accused neo-nazi has also done some investigation on the past records of the men who are prosecuting him. Dr Krämer, senior public prosecutor who is handling the case, was himself a public prosecutor in the nazi Berlin "People's Court" in 1942, and was instrumental in obtaining a death sentence against a member of a Polish resistance group.

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On other pages we report some of the political events connected with the 15th anniversary celebrations of the GDR, but the birthday was not entirely devoted to serious speech-making. In all the towns and villages of the Republic there were big open-air parties with dancing, music, and all the fun of the fair. I was interested to note that at least on East Berlin's Karl Marx Allee the hit tune of the day was obviously the famous Beatle number "I Wanna Hold Your Hand".

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If your copy of GERMAN REPORT has arrived irregularly lately, if change of address requests and so on have not been executed promptly, please bear with us. Two cases of illness on our tiny staff have created havoc in the office. It may be necessary to omit the next issue of the paper, which would normally appear on October 30th, but we hope this may be avoided.

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